

of Gen. 3 and what it means it's easy to see why it would be that God today would not speak to us in a visible way, yet that God would have spoken to people in ancient times when they did not have the Bible. You notice this says, God at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets. I think that's important for us to get in mind. God spoke in various ~~ways~~ ways.

Some people think God dictated every word of the Bible. from beginning to end. I've not met many people who think that. I've come across a great many people who think that's what all fundamentalists believe. But I have met very few people who believe that. Actually that's not what's taught in the Bible, that God dictated the whole Bible from beginning to end. The Bible teaches that God used the form of expression, the type of mind, the actual thinking activity of human beings in writing the Bible. But that he oversaw them through His Holy Spirit so they were kept from error in what they wrote. That's quite different from God having dictated every word.

The way some people take about the dictation theory of the Bible it sounds as if it would be a most terrible thing to believe in a dictation theory! I don't know what's quite so terrible about it. I dictate to a secretary. Why shouldn't God dictate if He chose. The Bible does say He did dictate the ten commandments. There are certain parts of the Bible that are most certainly given to us as words which God said. But the great bulk of the Bible is not given to us by dictation, but it is given to us by the Spirit of God. It is what God has given for us today.

But the Bible contains the record of how God spoke to these individuals in ancient times, and it says He spoke in various manners. Now you talk with a person, and a person can say exactly the same words to you on three occasions, and you can get three entirely different ideas because of his facial expression, because of his emphasis he puts into his words, the tone of his voice. There are all sorts of things that contribute to our speaking. We read how God spoke to Moses: Make the ark this way, make the tabernacle like this, and this, etc. We find all the directions. And we find later He says to Moses, Be sure you make it like the model like was shown you on the mountain. Did God give those words to Moses? Or did God show Moses a picture, a chart of it so that Moses would see what God wanted done, instead of giving it in the exact words? We don't know. He spoke in different ways at different times. But God spoke.

Whenever you speak in words there is always the possibility of misunderstanding so we have to compare Scripture with Scripture to know what God meant by what He spoke. It's all too easy to grab a few words out of context and think that's what the Bible teaches on the subject. Now those words may express exactly what God teaches on the subject. Very often a group of words summarizes the teaching of a passage, but we want to be sure it does.